

THE
ENCHANTED PLANTS,

FABLES IN VERSE.

INSCRIBED TO

MISS MONTOLIEU, AND MISS JULIA MONTOLIEU

Blush as thou may'st, my little book, for shame,
Nor hope with homely verse to purchase fame,
For such thy maker chose, and so designed,
Thy simple style to suit thy lowly kind. *Dryden.*

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author conceiving that any allusion to the botanic distinctions of plants would be inconsistent with the simplicity intended to be preserved in the following Fables, has waved the attempt, and has hazarded in personifying them, to give to each individual the sex she thought best adapted to the moral the fable is meant to convey.

The few Notes necessary for young readers will be found at the end of the book.

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INTRODUCTION.

Oft, to beguile the sultry hours,
In thought I've animated flowers,
 Enlivening thus my walk,
And though no botanist professed,
Their reasoning powers have shrewdly guessed,
 And longed to hear them talk.

It chanced one lovely day in June,
Just at the madding time of moon,
 I spoke this wish aloud;
When from a Pansy, with surprise,
I saw a gradual mist arise,
 And form a silvery cloud.

Forth from the glittering veil, behold,
In insect trappings, green and gold,
 A fairy figure sprung,
Her wand a cowslip's stamen seemed,
And on her head like diamonds beamed
 A casque with dew-drops hung.

Her silken pinions as she flew,
 Seemed by their size and purple hue,
 Spoils of the flower she left;
 She soared aloft, and touched mine ear,
 While I half-pleased, half-dead with fear,
 Remained of speech bereft.

Then first a small melodious tone,
 Before to mortal wight unknown,
 Struck my enraptured sense,
 'Flora,' it murmured, 'grants thy prayer,
 Long have her treasures been thy care,
 Receive thy recompense.'

This said, she vanished from my sight,
 And since, with ever new delight,
 I tend my fragrant hoards;
 No solitude exists for me,
 Since every flower, and shrub, and tree,
 Society affords.

GRUMLING.

FABLE I.

One day when winter ruled the skies,
I, shivering by the flame,
Heard a strange hurly-burly rise,
And wondered whence it came.

Spite of the season's biting gales
I traced th' uncommon sound,
And found four plants in snowy veils
Muttering on gifted ground.

A Crocus bright peeped forth alone,
The rest lay snug concealed,
Till each with discontented tone,
Her name, and woes revealed.

To Flora were their vows addressed
In supplicating mood;
The Crocus first her complaints expressed,
And thus her grievance stood.

‘ Oh Flora, cruel mother ! say,
 Why suckle me with snow ?
 Ah, why not let thy Crocus stay
 Till rival beauties blow ?

In Spring, when every shrub and flower
 Rejoices in the sun,
 Like babe entombed at early hour,
 My shivering race is run.

Let me but once among the gay
 My place with rapture find,
 Once hail the balmy breath of May,
 Thence forward I’m resigned.’

She ceased ; another plaintive moan
 Arose from neighbouring root ;
 The modest Violet, wayward grown,
 Presumed to urge her suit.

‘ Oh hear a timid suppliant’s prayer,
 Nymph of the blushing hours,
 Incline, and rescue from despair,
 The most forlorn of flowers !

Fair am I formed, and sweet 'tis true,
 Thy favourite blue-eyed maid,
 Each spring am fed with pearly dew,
 But cloistered in the shade.

Were I exalted on my stem,
 By solar beams inspired,
 What Pink, what Rose, what fragrant gem,
 Like me would be admired?

'How,' cried with royal pride, the Rose,
 (Betrayed by her petition,
 Or else what mortal could suppose
 She liked not her condition?)

'Shall such mean reptiles dare complain,
 Sweet Ruler of the year!
 While I, thy vice-queen, crowned in vain,
 Here shed the silent tear?

Though bright my tints, perfumed my breath,
 Though cherished by the fair,
 Though when I fade, even after death,
 My virtues honoured are:

Yet in my season, numerous Powers
 Approach too near the throne,
 The embroidered garden rich with flowers
 Scarce will my empire own.

If blushing to my court I came
 When Autumn rules the day,
 Then should I sovereign homage claim,
 And hold despotic sway.'

'Despotic sway indeed!' replied
 The image of the sun,
 'In June rejoice to curb thy pride,
 My reign is not begun.

Though, native of a distant clime,
 No British bloom I boast,
 Yet know, proud plant! my form sublime
 Eclipses all thine host.

Goddess! in radiant glories dressed
 Let me henceforth appear,
 By Summer's brightest beam caressed,
 Nor wait the closing year.'

‘Ungrateful tribe!’—with angry pause,
The indignant Goddess cries,
‘Not in the season’s wholesome laws
Your cause of grievance lies.

Spoiled by prosperity ye pine
Like many a pampered fair,
But woe to all, should I incline,
And grant to each her prayer.

So nicely are your hours arranged,
To every season linked,
That Nature’s laws one moment changed,
Your race would be extinct.’

She spoke; then bade the blast arise
Her message to convey;
Boreas swift rushing through the skies
Swept all their sighs away.

A M B I T I O N.

F A B L E I I.

DEEP in the woodland springs a cool,
Pellucid, sparkling, spacious pool,
Whose bosom from o'ershadowing trees
Is strewed with sweets by every breeze.

No mantle green obscures the wave
Where Gods might drink, and Naiads lave,
No reptiles, from stagnation bred,
Dare to profane its crystal bed.

By Flora's pencil painted round,
On the sedge-woven bank is found
Each thirsty flower that drinks the tide,
On lake, or stream, or river's side;

There Lythrum points her purple spears,
Iris her golden standard rears;
A milk white Lily like the Queen,
Sits in the midst, and crowns the scene.

But where does pure perfection dwell?
 Search the wild wood, the flowery dell;
 Did Nature in her daintiest mood
 E'er form one spot where all is good?

Too oft one vice defiles the breast
 Where sterling virtues shine confessed;
 Amid this unoffending race
 The giant Hemlock held a place.

With glossy leaves, and umbels bright,
 Luring the palate through the sight,
 Oft had the fatal monster smiled
 To rob a mother of her child.

Long had Queen Lily, and her train,
 Strove to root out the weed in vain;
 In this point lawyers all agree—
 Possession is a stubborn plea.

Conscious of strength, and craving power,
 He aimed to be the sovereign flower,
 And had not Nature curbed his spleen,
 Had hurled destruction at his Queen.

Once when the sky was overcast,
His dark leaves ruffled by the blast,
Mid storms of thunder, rain, and hail,
The rebel thus presumed to rail.

‘ Shall I with will and wit to rule,
Stand here a slave to guard this pool?
I, to whom fiends their poison grant,
Submit to yonder pale-faced plant?

Oh! could my juice infect the gale,
Or as in human veins prevail,
Soon would I change my state accurst,
And reign alone, or reign the first.’

The Lily from her silver tide,
Heard, and with dignity replied :
‘ Woe to all safety, peace, and right,
When wickedness and power unite ;

Laws, virtue, policy, are vain,
When low-born plants pretend to reign ;
Such as least willingly obey,
Most tyrannize possessed of sway.

Go, venom'd weed, and vent thy spite
Where fogs create eternal night;
In bog, or fen, dominion gain,
And over toads, and lizards reign.

The baleful plant with fury stung,
Had now high treason on his tongue;
The tempest rendered utterance vain,
And broke his blood-stained stalk in twain.

S C A N D A L ;

Or the Painted-lady Sweet Pea.

F A B L E I I I .

Gay Anemone, daughter of Art,
 (Though her ancestors sprung from the wood,)
 To Ranunculus, friend of her heart,
 Chattered scandal as fast as she could.

One evening the subject she chose
 Was peculiarly painful to me,
 For my favourite, next to the Rose,
 Is the pink-and-white sweet-scented Pea.

‘ Look there ! ’ said the fanciful flower,
 (By whimsical botanists dressed)
 ‘ How yon vain youthful plant of an hour
 Smiles and flaunts like a beauty professed.

Though with us in the garden displayed,
 Unimproved her corollas remain,
 Still blushing, unformed, unarrayed,
 Like her cousins who bask on the plain.’

‘How blushing?’ her friend sneering, cries,
 ‘The old Daffodil whispered last night,
 And you know on those subjects she’s wise,
 That this innocent paints red and white.

While her exquisite honeyed perfume,
 For which the bees tease her to death,
 They have found too, and so I presume,
 Is fictitious—to cover her breath.

Then to see how she flirts with them all,
 How she aims in a nosegay to shine,
 And because she is painted and tall,
 Conceits herself blooming and fine.’

A Sweet-William concealed in the shade,
 Who their kind observations had heard,
 Much loving the bright-bosomed maid,
 Thought it high time to put in a word.

‘Fine ladies, your eloquence spare,
 Oh spare it in pity to me!
 Or my heart is quite lost to the fair,
 Supremely fair, Sweet-scented Pea.

For envy alone could suggest
 The rank malice that fell from your tongue,
 And your censures completely expressed
 That she's innocent, lovely, and young.

Pink and silver, like *Midsummer* skies,
 Is it thence you her blushes defame,
 That amazed at her own brilliant dyes,
 Nature once stooped to Art for a name?

By thus over-shooting the mark,
 Poor ill-nature defeats her own end;
 As a glow-worm's more bright in the dark,
 You're but foils to my beautiful friend;

Doomed malicious old virgins to fade,
 Whom multiplied petals deform,
 While she her soft banner displayed,
 Soon will shelter her fruit from the storm.'

The ladies felt something like shame,
 And indignant, were ready to cry,
 They ev'n vowed no more beauties to blame—
 That is—when Sweet-William is by.

PREJUDICE.

FABLE IV.

A youthful Myrtle, to her climate true,
Mid Devon's balmy vales luxuriant grew;
And on a southern wall, by Colin trained,
Enriched with flowers, superiour height obtained.
Near, nursed by art, in crystal prison pent,
A thousand alien plants their winter spent,
Yearly released, when June resumed her reign,
To mingle sweets with Summer's genial train.
Among these strangers of maturer bloom,
Long had an Orange-tree dispensed perfume,
And long our Myrtle, though herself so fair,
Had viewed her radiant boughs with secret care,
When one late season, flirting her green fan,
To shew her wit, (read spleen) she thus began.
' Good morrow, Ma'am ! I stare to see you here,
I thought you meant t' indulge at home this year ;
Too delicate, since now you're somewhat old,
To quit your household gods, and brave the cold.

I doubt, indeed, what claim you have to smile
 Here mid the high-born nymphs of Britain's isle,
 While hot-beds kept for you at vast expense,
 Display man's vanity, but not his sense.'

Th' exotic plant, stung with the Myrtle's pride,
 Waving her golden honours, thus replied:
 ' Unfriendly mortal, prejudiced, and vain!
 Can England's child a foreigner disdain?
 Can you in climes for genuine feeling praised,
 Depress the race your generous nation raised?
 Ill suits your sex to sharpen sorrow's dart,
 Ill your fair blossoms with a cruel heart;
 Me, wretched exile from my native shore,
 To these well-wooded cliffs misfortune bore;
 Where, sheltered by benevolence, I grew,
 Nor can a heart so grateful injure you.'
 The forward shrub, awed by the matron's frown,
 Was quickly, as all boasters are, cast down,
 And much abashed, in soothing strain expressed,
 ' She meant not to offend—'twas but a jest.'
 ' Oh vain excuse!' the wounded tree replied,
 ' Shall proud Prosperity the wretch deride?
 Ev'n were it strictly true, thy plea is vain,
 Ne'er deem it sport to give another pain;

And chiefly one, by fate severe oppressed,
When insults sink like daggers to the breast;
Oft we call insults jests, by names deceived,
Deemed jests no longer when with pain received.'

The Myrtle blushed, and as she older grew,
Grew wiser, and allowed the maxim true,
And modest now, exhales her rich perfumes,
Worthy the gentle clime where still she blooms.

SENSIBILITY.

FABLE V.

FEELING! by words so ill defined,
So lovely in an honest mind,
How art thou grown in Fashion's schools
The mask of vice, the cant of fools!

How oft Impatience, temper's storm,
For sanction grasps thy glowing form!
How Affectation, Beauty's shame,
And Weakness prostitute thy name!

How oft by songs and novels taught,
They who ne'er knew one generous thought,
Their sensibilities reveal,
Sacred to such as truly feel.

She who the orphan's tear neglects,
Flavia, the tragic Muse affects,
In sorrow with the heroine vies—
Does Flavia feel, because she cries?

And love-lorn nymphs whom vows deceive,
Unmoved their roof paternal leave,
Passion for sentiment mistake,
And doom a parent's heart to break.

My fancy wandering uncontrolled,
Once to the river's side I strolled,
When to my mind these thoughts occurred,
Wakened by plaintive sounds I heard.

The breeze was gentle as my theme,
And Cynthia mild as poet's dream,
And hushed was every leafy spray,
Save the sad subject of my lay.

A Willow bending o'er the flood,
Her leaves just starting from the bud,
Like bird of night I heard complain
In moping melancholy strain.

' Ah Nature! why when all is gay,
Or resting from the toils of day,
Why is my waking soul the shrine
Of sense so exquisitely fine?

If but a sun-beam strikes too warm,
 How faints my undulating form!
 The most dispirited of trees,
 If hollow sounds the evening breeze.

When cloudy yon blue vault appears,
 Instant I droop dissolved in tears;
 If but a poplar frowns in scorn,
 I sorrow that I e'er was born.'

While thus she mourned, she sobbed aloud,
 And to the stream her branches bowed;
 I gazed; and still she wept and sighed,
 Yet seemed to feel a secret pride.

An Alder by her plaints awoke,
 Thus in reproachful accents spoke,
 'Why, Willow, why these vigils keep,
 And break the sacred hour of sleep?

Why still deem Nature's laws perverse,
 Who make her choicest gifts a curse?
 Feeling, whose shrine thy tears profane,
 Is not th' eternal nurse of pain.

When rain and tempest rule the hours,
 How sympathize the plants and flowers?
 The sun once more revives the plain,
 They laugh with hope and joy again.

Mark Pleasure's fascinating wiles,
 And Beauty's heart-illumined smiles;
 The eye's quick glancing rapture tells
 Unquestioned where the Angel dwells.

Where points the moon-beam, dost thou see
 Near yon grey stone a lofty tree,
 The Cypress, mourner of the grove,
 Placed by the hand of widowed love?

His grief with dignity he bears,
 A dark and settled sorrow wears,
 Affects no attitudes of woe,
 And scorns one trivial tear should flow.

The genuine anguish of the heart,
 Nor tears, nor sobs, nor groans impart,
 But like this deep and silent wave,
 Steals without murmur to the grave.

To him who pines with grief sincere,
Like dreams of heavenly bliss appear
The fancied evils you deplore.'....
She paused.—The Willow wept the more.

F O L L Y.

F A B L E VI.

Now, to while away the hours,
Shall I tell you what befel
A Rose, the very pearl of flowers,
Who loved her charms.. Alas! too well.

On a verdant bank she flourished,
Hanging o'er a crystal stream,
There a numerous offspring nourished,
Time departing like a dream.

Conscious of transcendent beauty,
Her children seemed her second praise,
She prized them not from love, but duty;
Her joy was in the flood to gaze.

But moments tell, and all must perish,
And beauty flies on fleeting wing,
Virtue's the only charm to cherish,
She blossoms in eternal spring.

One day looking in her mirror,
 The sun was high, the wave was clear,
 She saw with starts, and throbs of terror,
 A wrinkle on her leaves appear.

She daily watched, and saw her flower
 Assume a sort of yellow cast,
 She gazed around, and saw each hour
 Her buds more brilliant than the last.

Belinda would her glass have broken,
 But as her's braved her utmost rage,
 She spoke; but words in passion spoken
 Nor sentimental are, nor sage.

' Oh Nature! harsh to pretty creatures,
 Thy choicest favours seem our bane,
 The more divine our form and features,
 The more intense our future pain.

Ah! what avails that, once enchanting,
 The poet has my beauties sung,
 That ev'n on Julia's charms descanting,
 My name hung trembling on his tongue?

To point his flatteries still the lover
 Derived his softest blush from me;
 My hues are fled, my triumphs over,
 Now let him write my elegy.

Would, like the Dandelion yonder,
 A vulgar weed in meadows known,
 I ne'er had bloomed the garden's wonder,
 Or, early nipped, had never blown.'

The tender buds around her sitting,
 Who grieved to see their mother grieve,
 With gentle voice their age befitting,
 Thus strove her anguish to relieve.

' Oh dear Mamma! Oh cease your sorrow!
 With patience now your loss sustain,
 Your charms though fading, ours tomorrow
 Will make you value life again.

See the coeval friends you cherish,
 They too begin to lose their bloom,
 With you they blew, with you they perish,
 Would you alone survive the doom?

Still are your sweets a store of pleasure'——

I thought the moral suited me,
And seizing quick the withering treasure,
Embalmed her in a pot-pourri.

ENVY.

FABLE VII.

O'er plains with Summer's radiance spread,
Where, mixed with Heath in bloom,
The Furze displays her golden hues,
And scatters wild perfume,

A Shepherd passed at evening hour
With weary step and slow,
Reflecting on the various charms
Earth's rudest scenes bestow.

Gilt by the sun's departing beam
The prospect glowed more bright ;
More fragrant blew the scented breeze,
His little home in sight,

A turf-built cottage on the heath
Where cheerful labour dwelt,
And from repose experienced bliss
That grandeur never felt.

No blackbirds cheered the unwooded spot,
 But sweet the sheep-bell's sound;
 Unscreened from winds, but Ivy clung,
 And Woodbine flaunted round.

Yet Pride even here an harbour found,
 For up the casements twined,
 Th' ambitious shrub her station scorned,
 And pale with envy pined.

Her blossoms waving in the breeze,
 Thus sad her accents flow,
 As from the chimney's height she viewed
 The sea of gold below.

' While yonder weed o'erspreads the plain
 And breathes her sweets around,
 Ah! why dependant from my birth
 Am I in fetters bound?

Fixed to a humble peasant's hut,
 By barbarous man compelled,
 Confined to tame, domestic praise,
 Scarce scented, scarce beheld.'

‘ Ungrateful plant!’ in accents meek
 The faithful Ivy cried,
 ‘ And dost thou that dear tie lament,
 Thy safety, and thy pride?’

True, yonder gay luxuriant throng
 Adorned in rich attire,
 Seen from afar wide homage claim,
 And passengers admire.

Thou flexible and tender, formed
 By Nature to depend,
 Canst boast, what mortals few possess,
 The blessing of a friend.

Shall adulation’s fickle breath
 Raise envy in thy breast,
 Who still protected, yielding sweets,
 Art cherished, and caressed?’

She ceased; and soon the storm arose,
 The Woodbine hung her head;
 The rain descends, the tempest raves,
 She blessed the friendly shed.

But on the wild unsheltered heath
At morn the traveller past,
The golden blossoms wide dispersed,
Had yielded to the blast.

LOVE.

FABLE VIII.

Fancy not men who read my page,
That only care and spleen engage
The blooming tribes I sing;
No—they enjoy the world like you,
Make love, feed, sleep, and quaff the dew,
And frolic in the Spring.

Like mortals too of various taste,
Some plants are frail, and some are chaste,
Some with affection blessed;
The Hedysarum loves the Sun,
Coquets it till his race is run,
Then nods, and sinks to rest.

While the Mimosa, modest maid,
Even at the Zephyr's breath dismayed,
The virgin's fear pourtrays;
And Lupins whom their buds delight,
Who shield them from the damps of night,
Deserve a mother's praise.

But Scandal says, (what won't she say?)
 That every flower and plant is gay,
 By Nature's precepts trained;
 But lest my muse censorious prove,
 I only sing their mortal love,
 Too pure to be arraigned.

At six one balmy Summer morn,
 To hail June's perfumes newly born
 I through the shrubbery strayed;
 When from the myriads all around
 Th' accustomed soft and silvery sound
 Rose murmuring through the shade.

But chiefly I inclined mine ear
 A curious dialogue to hear
 Between two amorous flowers;
 What woman but had done the same?
 For each was talking of his flame
 Just as we talk of ours.

' Let Tulip hear, and judge our cause,
 And we be guided by his laws,'
 A gallant Larkspur cried:

‘ Done,’ cried a Pink, with double crest,
 ‘ Which of us Silvia loves the best
 Let Tulip now decide.’

LARKSPUR.

When Silvia, Goddess of the groves,
 Enchanted through her garden roves,
 Soon as my tints she spies,
 With what delight she stops to gaze,
 Soft as descending dews her praise,
 Bright as the sun her eyes.

PINK.

When Silvia, by the breeze caressed,
 Herself the Queen of flowers confessed,
 Appears, eclipsed they pine,
 For me she oft the Rose resigns,
 And sighing o’er my form inclines,
 Her breath more sweet than mine.

LARKSPUR.

Behold this spot, how large a space
 She yields to us, her favourite race,
 Placed here in crowded ranks;

Armed with our spurs, I heard her swear,
 'None but the brave deserve the fair;'
 I blushed, and bowed my thanks.

PINK.

Just now our variegated hue,
 And rich corollas hung with dew
 Attracted Silvia's eye;
 She placed the loveliest on her breast,
 And in a basket heaped the rest,—
 By chance she passed me by.

'Enough, enough!' Sir Tulip cries,
 'Be wise, brave Larkspur, yield the prize;
 A word before we part,
 Value not what a lady says,
 Whom her words slight, or whom they praise,
 Her actions speak her heart.'

TEMPTATION.

FABLE IX.

‘ Why, flower celestial blue, oh tell
Why droops thy silken head,
Why scarce unfolded hangs thy bell,
Why are those dew-drops shed?

Has the east blighting nipped thy buds,
Have the slugs pierced thy leaves,
Have the hot sun-beams drank the floods,
Campanula thus grieves?

Say, on this dew-bespangled lawn
Encircling our abode,
Which mingling trees and shrubs adorn,
With fragrant blossoms strewed,

Watered and sheltered from thy birth
Beneath the Acacia’s bough,
Placed on this chosen spot of earth,
What flower so blessed as thou?’

Thus a bright Lupin in the grove
 Kind as a Summer shower,
 To soothe, in gentle accents strove,
 A melancholy flower.

' Ah woe is me !' with mournful voice
 I heard the plant reply,
 ' Ne'er shall Convolvulus rejoice,
 Here doomed to pine and die.

The sun was scarcely set last night,
 My bells began to close,
 When to my half-discerning sight
 A lovely vision rose.

How shall my artless speech describe
 The glories of its form?
 It seemed of that aerial tribe
 Which here at noontide swarm.

From yonder brake, on rainbow wing,
 It soared with solemn flight,
 Two wings were pale as leaves in Spring,
 Two like the Poppy bright.

“ Sweet flower ! Oh ! sweeter far,” it said,
 “ Than Musk-rose of the dale;
 Sweeter than Furze, or thymy bed,
 On Orange-scented gale !

At early dawn thy sapphire brood
 I passed, (to roving given)
 And thought in glassy wave I viewed
 The smiling face of heaven.

So beauteous, why stay here and sigh ?
 Oh grant thy lover's prayer !
 With us gay wanderers of the sky
 Come float in fields of air.”

Then with a pure ethereal kiss
 It pressed my leaves and fled ;
 I sigh for liberty and bliss
 Fixed to my earthy bed.’

‘ Oh shame !’ said Lupin, ‘ shame to grieve,
 Beware the tempter's theme,
 Thus fell the flower of Eden, Eve,
 Deluded by a dream.

Yon sun-born tribes like man may range,
With stronger wills impressed,
But shall the wild desire of change
Infect thy gentler breast?

They who o'er hill, and dale, and flood,
A thousand perils brave,
Oft welter in the field of blood,
Or perish in the wave.

We, happier far, their pleasures share,
Happier in death our doom,
Fade in the garlands of the fair,
Or strew the hero's tomb.

Then oh! beware the flatterer's speech,
Thy favoured station keep.'——
But long ere Lupin ceased to preach,
The Flow'ret fell asleep.

O P I N I O N.

Inscribed to H. J. Pye, Esq.

F A B L E X.

Last Christmas day, at matin hour,
I sallied to my winter bower,
Devoted at old Custom's shrine
To keep this holiday divine.
The ground was crisp, the lawn was white,
The water froze, the sun shone bright,
And icicles on every spray,
Like diamonds sparkled in the ray.
A Laurel, and a Holly long,
A thousand evergreens among,
Had robbed December of its gloom,
And decked my pew, and cheered my room.
As I approached, with weapon armed,
My hand was stayed, my senses charmed,
To hear each emerald-crested stalk
Engaged in sentimental talk.

Their gentle speech on seasons ran,
 And first the Muse's tree began,
 Soared on Imagination's wing,
 Dwelt on the charms of blue-eyed Spring,
 On western breezes, meadows gay,
 And all the infant sweets of May,
 With numbers soft, and specious sense,
 At poor October's sole expense ;
 Her though he praised in magic strain,
 I plainly saw 'twas 'gainst the grain,
 Divine he owned for Painting's eye,
 Or Siddons like, to make us cry.

The Holly, rich with redbreast's fruit,
 Thus strove her reasons to refute.
 ' Ere May's delicious hours you sing,
 Prove Britain boasts a genial spring,
 Alas! our poet's May is June,
 Soon lost amid the blaze of noon.
 Or if mild Zephyrs earlier blow,
 And premature delights bestow,
 Bleak eastern gales, and blights succeed,
 And on our buds and blossoms feed.
 Our nymphs to-day in love with flowers,
 Pluck Lilacs, dream of rosy bowers,

A cobweb vesture scarce sustain,
 Tomorrow wrapped in furs again.

All hail, bright Summer's glorious beams!
 All hail, deep shades, and cooling streams!
 Nor will I Nature's boast deride,
 To flatter Autumn's modest pride :
 Yet much the sober hour I love,
 To watch the gradual changing grove,
 (I doomed to die but ne'er to fade)
 To pity too the withering shade.
 Then sportsmen, farmers, all maintain
 The cheerful joys of Autumn's reign,
 Her echoing woods, her open fields,
 The luscious store her orchard yields,
 Her bracing air, her moderate sun,
 Her evenings when the chace is done ;
 Then ere compelled by piercing storms,
 A cheerful fire, on sufferance, warms,
 Untainted by the pang to know
 That thousands pine with cold and woe.'

Here ceased the plant, to my surprise,
 Nor spoke one praise of wintry skies ;
 Like man who while the present cloy,
 Still dreams of past and future joys.

I thought it now my turn to preach,
 And Nature's wrongs inspired my speech:
 'Ungrateful shrubs! Ah why disdain
 This brightest season of your reign,
 Unconscious of your favoured doom
 Amid surrounding death to bloom?——
 Though pleasure flies man's frost-bound fields,
 Virtue her mental treasure yields;
 Sweet Charity thy blessings rise
 Like breath of Roses to the skies;
 Pity like Summer's dew descends
 On him deprived of roof and friends;
 While housed beneath a snow-charged sky
 That bids us on ourselves rely,
 We reap from muse, or moral page,
 The plenteous harvest of the sage.'

This said, lost moments to repair,
 My purposed spoils engaged my care;
 Yet never plucked I flower, or bough,
 But that I felt—I know not how—
 That leaves were veins, a babe each bud,
 The rind a skin, the juices blood.
 Thus ere I struck, I looked around,
 And plants less animated found;

But lest my preference should offend,
I snatched one laurel from my friend,
And though a monarch must bestow it,
I brought it home to crown his poet.

P R I D E.

F A B L E X I.

A straw-roofed cottage in a glade
Beside an ancient wood,
Protected by its tufted shade,
In humble neatness stood.

Before it, measuring many a rood,
A corn field sloping spread,
And reached the vale where Tavy's flood
Foams o'er its rocky bed.

A hedge, through every season green,
Divided from the wheat
A garden, formed for use I ween,
Yet beautiful and sweet.

There of a thousand brilliant dyes,
Disposed with rustic taste,
Each flower and plant that shepherds prize,
Each wholesome herb was placed.

The virgin Snow-drop Winter cheered ;
 In Spring, in choice array
 Tulips and Hyacinths appeared ;
 In Summer Pinks so gay.

The mottled Daisy set in rows,
 Eye-bright to clear the view,
 Sweet Williams, Heart's-ease, Scarlet-Rose,
 And Stocks, and Violets blue.

In sunny corner where the bees
 Their honeyed trade pursue,
 Grew Majoram, Lavender, Sweet Peas,
 And Rosemary, Thyme and Rue.

But of this bright enamelled bed,
 The Polyanthus race
 In many a tuft profusely spread,
 Usurped the largest space.

Not that in merit such excel,
 (Few boasted favourites do)
 But that the posied Sunday belle
 Loved their becoming hue.

One vain of preference, pert and gay,
 Just peeping through the pale,
 A Cowslip spied, in field array,
 And thus began to rail.

' My country cousin, why so near
 Us flowers of high degree?
 Methinks you look but shabby here,
 And much discredit me.

What if these noble garden plants
 My low connexions knew?
 I soon despised must fly these haunts,
 And herd with weeds like you.'

' I am not used,' the modest flower,
 With downcast eyes, replied,
 ' To vaunt myself, nor, had I power,
 Would emulate thy pride.'

By chance in Honeysuckle bower
 I sat, and pleased at heart
 To hear the meekness of the flower,
 With interest took her part.

‘ And hush,’ I cried, ‘ conceited thing!
 Thy place so prized resign,
 While yonder gentle child of Spring,
 Henceforward shall be mine.

Void of discernment, dost thou think
 Her less deserving praise,
 Whose unaffected virtues shrink,
 And shun the public gaze ?

Compare with hers thy boasted bloom,
 Her graceful form behold,
 Observe her elegant perfume,
 Her bells of speckled gold.

At village feasts, where most ye shine,
 On Phebe’s breast ye die ;
 But Cowslips yield the generous wine
 That sparkles in her eye.’

Transplanted from her native fields
 Awhile the flowret sighed,
 But now content her fragrance yields,
 The cottage garden’s pride.

VULGARITY.

FABLE XII.

One August morn before the sun
Had reached his glorious height,
What time ere harvest is begun
The corn fields most delight.

Snug by a hedge, o'erhung with trees,
Where blades less numerous grew,
A nest of Poppies, placed at ease,
Conversed with Bottles-Blue.

'I wonder much,' with rustic grace
A Poppy thus began,
'Why our mild inoffensive race
Is so despised by man.

The farmer, in whose fields we're found,
Rejects us with disgrace,
And looks on Poppies in his ground
As pimples in his face.

Man too, of strange, perverted taste,
 Miscals our potent sweets,
 Yet leeks are mid his dainties placed,
 And onions crown his treats.

The same high parentage we claim
 With Oriental plants,
 And near relations bear his name
 Who in the garden flaunts.

Owne'd too by soporific powers
 Who share the Doctor's pride,
 Connected with Physician flowers,
 To science we're allied.

How bright mid universal green
 Our scarlet host appears,
 Not in more splendid garb are seen
 St. James's Volunteers.'

'And we, a mild cerulean fair,'
 A Blue-bottle replies,
 'Though less conspicuous, proudly wear
 The livery of the skies.

From Switzerland's romantic heights
 Sprung our exotic race,
 Whom now this gentle soil delights,
 Who British gardens grace.

Let Roses still in hackneyed strain,
 With Celia's Lilies blend,
 To blue-eyed Marian's sighing swain
 Our tints new flatteries lend.

While clowns, those tasteless sons of gain,
 Contemn the painted meads,
 On profit bent, our charms disdain,
 And scoffing call us, Weeds.'

Amid the blades that glittered round,
 One loftier than the rest,
 With four-fold spiky honours crowned,
 The motley throng addressed.

'Ye vulgar flowers' (she seemed to frown)
 'Who our bright limits share,
 Intruders (as at routs in town
 Queer country neighbours are)

Where Industry profusion yields,
 How dare ye creep so near?
 Go, lurk in cold neglected fields;
 No gipsies harbour here.

Blasting the boon to toil assigned,
 Ill omen'd plants ye blow,
 Ceres, indignant, hates your kind,
 Nor prospers where ye grow.'

She spoke;—when lo! a hostile troop,
 The reaper band appears;
 The trembling flowers began to droop,
 The Wheat to shake her ears.

Alas! they chose that very morn
 To scatter death around,
 And Poppies, Blue-bottles, and Corn,
 Were levelled with the ground.

D E S P A I R.

F A B L E X I I I .

List, maidens, in this witching hour,
 How a charmed Hare-bell loved a Swain
 Yclep'd the Shepherd of the bower,
 Who cared not for her pain.

Yet he in truth was kind and good,
 And he wooed Geraldine the fair,
 And gathered garlands in the wood
 To deck her golden hair.

He culled the wild Rose wet with dew,
 He culled the Lily of the vale,
 And Eglantine, and Violet blue,
 Sweet May, and Primrose pale.

And eke this small bell, mid the grass,
 Oft his exploring eye would meet,—
 And yet he stooped not, for alas!
 She breathed no tempting sweet.

‘ Oh !’ then in pleading strain, cried she,
 ‘ Too lovely Shepherd of the bower !
 Would that I were, till plucked by thee,
 The green wood’s sweetest flower.

And fading, on thy gentle breast
 One happy, happy moment lie,
 Once to thy heart be fondly pressed,
 And then, rejoicing, die.’

One luckless morn this lover flew
 O’er dells and dingles to the grove,
 To greet with flowrets bathed in dew
 The birth-day of his love.

Alas! he flew with careless speed,
 For he right gladsome was and young,
 And crushed the Hare-bell of the mead,
 Who thus her death lay sung :

‘ O Shepherd so beloved by me,
 My early doom I joyous meet,
 Too happy, since disdained by thee,
 To perish at thy feet.’

Damsels, profit by my story,
 Thus in unfashioned phrase rehearsed,
 Prize your peace, and maiden glory,
 Nor love who loves not first.

CRUELTY.

FABLE XIV.

A Catchfly, long for cruelty renowned,
 Infested Flora's consecrated ground,
 Nor from the dawn of day, till setting sun,
 Had guillotine more execution done.

From bright ephemera glancing to and fro,
 He tasted raptures sportsmen only know,
 That our more active, no less savage race,
 Derive from shooting, angling, and the chase.

Yet these achievements no abhorrence raise,
 Use becomes Nature, so the proverb says,
 And this by Custom's clearly understood,
 That Man loves sport, that game and fish are good.

But thou, fair Nymph, whose weeping accents plead
 If but a mouse or sparrow's doomed to bleed,
 Canst thou love him whom slaughter's trophies stain?—
 Oh check thy tears, or choose a gentler swain!

But truce to satire, Muse! thy strain command,
 Mankind's caprices stronger tones demand,
 Accord to fabled lore the lyre, and tell
 What just deserts our tyrant plant befel.

Domitian's emblem, mischief fired his breast,
 Nor could his maw the solid food digest,
 Nice as the gods, the vegetable tribe
 From ducts unseen nectareous draughts imbibe.

His stem like Basilisk's eye allured his prey,
 Though formed with will and wings to fly away;
 Still victims fluttered round in frolic maze,
 Heedless as Moths who perish in the blaze.

Thus in a paradise of fruits and flowers,
 Revolving monstrous deeds he passed his hours,
 Displayed th' accustomed uniform of blood,
 And trained to carnage every opening bud.

Though Flora, Goddess of the enamelled plains,
 With chief delight o'er flowery vassals reigns,
 Fond of mellifluous treats her sovereign sway
 Myriads of glittering insect tribes obey.

Oft they in vain implored their Queen to grant
 A quick deliverance from this dragon-plant,
 Oft too their bosom friends, the fragrant race,
 Prayed riddance from their gentle tribe's disgrace.

But no petition altering Nature's law,
 They claimed in self-defence the right of war,
 And called a council measures to devise,
 Of Bees, Gnats, Caterpillars, Ants, and Flies.

On a dew-sprinkled bed of Mignonette,
 Armed cap-a-pee the brilliant members met,
 Nor did the Grecian chiefs in days of yore
 Deserve ten pages of description more.

How then the vivid wonders of each tribe
 Shall my contracted numbers e'er describe?
 Each form minute in scaly armour light,
 And Butterfly with gaudy banners bright?

And Lady-bird in regimentals seen,
 And feathered Moth, and Fly in gold and green,
 And humble Bee yclep'd their trumpeter?—
 But hush, my Muse, lest faithless Memory err.

The flowers in silken robes gave sage advice,
 And called the buzzing throng to order thrice,
 And then decreed distinguished troops should go
 And perish, or exterminate the foe.

To undermine the sanguinary brute
 Large Caterpillars first attacked the root,
 Beetles and Slugs his wily verdure eat,
 Beneath whose leaflets lurked the clammy net.

At length a Wasp, with Roman virtue fired,
 By patriot love of liberty inspired,
 Flew at the obnoxious flower with active wing,
 And self-devoted sacrificed his sting.

Thus fell the plant who Fortune's gifts abused,
 By foes beset, by gentle hearts accused.
 England, may virtue long adorn thy crown,
 And none but vegetable tyrants frown.

V A N I T Y.

F A B L E X V.

A Lilac, Flora's darling child,
 The shrubbery's early pride,
 In magic accents, sweetly wild,
 With exultation cried,

'Avaunt from me, ye tardy flowers
 That grovel near the ground,
 Compelled to wait for sultry hours,
 In verdant fetters bound!

While I, precursor oft of May,
 In orient splendour dressed,
 Make the cold face of Nature gay,
 Her first-born most caressed.

Warm with benevolence I bloom,
 Pride of the embowering shade,
 Or plucked, the gorgeous dome perfume,
 Or deck yon matchless maid.

Not even the Queen of shrubs, the Rose,
 Can double gifts bestow,
 Useless her humble foliage blows,
 Though bright her petals glow.'

This uttered with triumphant mien,
 Her light leaves swelled with pride ;
 Child of the valley, mild, serene,
 The Lily thus replied :

' Vain blossom, gem of transient doom,
 Whence thy presumptuous boast ?
 That mid Spring's yet unripened bloom
 Thy charms are courted most.

True, Nature fixed with care divine
 Mid opening buds thy reign ;
 What place to thee could June assign
 Amid her thronging train ?

Where trees in full luxuriance grow,
 How vain thy boasted shade !
 Where in bright ranks Carnations blow,
 How would thy faint hues fade !

By Julia are thy sweets confessed,
Soft mingling with the gale ;
But place thee on her snowy breast,
How soon thy odours fail.

Fair mid her leaves, thy sister see
In virgin tints attired,
She dwells not on her charms like thee,
Yet, is she less admired ?

Abashed her purple blushes fled,
The pride of Summer came,
And Lilacs numbered with the dead,
No more our shepherds name.

CONTENTION.

FABLE XVI.

A Chesnut-tree laden with bloom,
A Laburnum with boughs dropping gold,
A Hyacinth breathing perfume,
One Spring morning proceeded to scold.

The cause of the quarrel averred
Was a doubt in an ill-fated hour,
Which for beauty, by man is preferred,
The Tree, or the Shrub, or the Flower.

The Flower, as a Lady, spoke first,
And (illiberal satire says) most,
Sweets, garlands, charms, emblems rehearsed,
And made lovers, and sonnets, her boast.

But this was so common a ditty,
And the Shrub held her merits so cheap,
That he swore she was pretty and witty,
And besought her her counsel to keep.

‘Thy delights,’ added he, ‘are confessed,
 Truly Nature has made thy race fair,
 But thy beauties by Monarchs caressed,
 Thy favours even cottagers share.

We Shrubs of a lineage refined
 Ne’er stoop with plebeians to bloom,
 Though Syringas, of ignoble kind,
 By chance may the village perfume.

So graceful our flexible arms,
 Such fragrance our blossoms exhale,
 That even forest trees envy our charms,
 And parterres with vexation turn pale.’

The Chesnut, indignant and proud,
 Frowned, as if he both parties despised,
 And shaking his branches, aloud,
 In few words his pretensions comprised.

‘Sweet Flowret,’ (he flattered the sex)
 ‘I perceive my protection’s required,
 And lament yonder coxcomb should vex
 You, made to be loved and admired.

But no wonder he triumphs o'er you
Who ventures with Oaks to compare,
They whose might Britain's enemies rue,
Who the glory of conquerors share.

Let fops ring their own empty praises,
Who real insignificance feel,
Self-boasting but ridicule raises,
Our merits let others reveal.'

The furious Laburnum replied,
The Chesnut retorted again,
The Flower with the strongest took side,
Yet endeavoured their rage to restrain.

But why to curb anger aspire?
'Tis a torrent that roars in the mind,
As easy to rein in the fire,
Or check the wild gusts of the wind.

Each grew so outrageous at last,
Such unparalleled insults occurred,
And they all talked together so fast,
That I scarce could distinguish one word.

So fearing that breakfast might wait,
And conscious no blood could ensue,
I left them to end the debate,
And came home to relate it to you.

IMPRUDENCE.

FABLE XVII.

Through yonder furze-grown hill whose brow recedes,
A deep sunk road to Milton village leads,
Whose whitened steeple at the close of day
Seen in the valley, cheers the pilgrim's way.
On each side, rich with variegated shade,
Steep rise the verdant banks with rock inlaid,
Whose crags, with Holly, Broom, and Elder crowned,
The fragrant Honeysuckle wantons round,
While from the clefts pellucid drops distil,
And form, half hid by leaves, a gurgling rill.
Above luxuriant blooms th' uncultured Rose,
Mixed with the Hop, the feathering Goat's-beard blows,
And here and there a pollard Oak reclines,
Whose moss-grown stem the tendril plant entwines,
Bindweed, and Nightshade, luring to destroy,
And tempting Bramble, bane of truant boy.
In Spring, with topaz tint and emerald stem,
The Primrose studs the sod with many a gem ;

While Nature yielding with judicious care
 In every flower a moral to the fair,
 In grassy shade half veiled her Violet race,
 And bade them teach the hamlet modest grace.

The mother flowret of the fragrant brood
 Oft gave them good advice, as mothers shou'd.
 ' My children, cherish solitude,' she said,
 ' Nor on each wanton breeze your odours shed,
 Here flourish safe beneath my sheltering wing,
 Sweet, unobtrusive harbingers of Spring.'

But one, a pretty, lively, blue eyed flower,
 Oft would peep slily from her humble bower,
 Pleased with the prospect, and the passers by,
 She loved to scent the gale, and catch the eye.
 One fatal evening, bent on rural feats,
 Maria came to fill her lap with sweets,
 Amid the grass the little truant spied,
 And ' to my bosom come! Oh come!' she cried;
 But ev'n gay childhood scorns an easy prize,
 She saw a Moth on fluttering wing arise,
 Her willing favourite dropped upon the ground,
 And chased the vagrant with elastic bound.

The slighted beauty fell, as Fate decreed,
 On the soft borders of a painted mead ;

Revived by dews, when to herself she came,
Alas! she looked around with grief and shame,
Amid the gaze of Buttercups she laid,
No friend to pity, and no leaves to shade;
Oft on her mother's dear-loved name she cried,
And mocked by vulgar weeds, lamenting died.

INGRATITUDE.

FABLE XVIII.

On that green hill's romantic side
Which crowns yon distant view,
O'er-hanging Severn's gentle tide,
Two youthful Beeches grew.

Beneath Palemon's fostering care,
In one fraternal band,
Unnumbered nurslings flourished there,
Reared by his skilful hand.

But chief in faithful friendship paired,
These sisters lived, and loved,
Each other's simple pleasures shared,
Each other's sorrows proved.

When from the North the blast arose,
And shook their tender forms,
Together twining to oppose,
They braved the winter storms.

Or when mild Maia's Zephyrs blew,
And gently waved the trees,
Their secret thoughts, to friendship true,
They whispered in the breeze.

No envy lurked beneath their leaves
To blast their mutual fame,
Envy a sister's triumph grieves,
Their triumphs were the same.

Single, their forms, their polished stems
Might beauty's meed have claimed,
But joined, these vegetable gems
Through all the land were famed.

Alas full oft has Beauty proved
The ills with fame combined !
Palemon to a friend he loved,
One favourite Beech resigned.

But as with trembling hand he snatched
Her fibres from the ground,
The sister root from birth attached
Received a fatal wound.'

A splendid Castle's noble pile
A park's wide precinct graced;
Where frowns the Oak, where Chesnuts smile,
The chosen tree was placed.

There while the minutes danced along,
And every scene was gay,
While mirth, festivity, and song,
Resounded through the day,

Th' exulting plant, elate with pride,
(Ye prosperous fair, attend!)
Forgot her grove, the silver tide,
And ah! forgot her friend.

The wounded Tree in silence grieves,
By cold unkindness torn,
She lost the lustre of her leaves,
And drooped, and died forlorn.

But mark what punishment befalls
Waste, luxury, and vice,
Ruin soon stormed the Castle-walls,
The timber fetched its price.

The Forest a new lord confessed,
 Whom taste nor beauty fired;
 Th' ungrateful Beech, among the rest,
 Beneath the axe expired.

JEALOUSY.

FABLE XIX.

For each emotion of the mind
 A fairy shrine I've tried to find
 In Flower, in Shrub, or Tree;
 But ah what flower, or plant could bear
 The struggling, torturing pangs that tear
 Thy victims, Jealousy?

Could blossom frail, whose tender form
 Scarce for an hour endures the storm,
 With thee one moment dwell?
 Th' uncertain dread, the chilled desire,
 The sick regret, the restless fire
 Must burst her silken shell.

Or were the sturdy giant Oak
 To feel thine agonizing yoke,
 His generous heart deceived;
 He whom no common blasts o'ertake,
 Soon would thy powerful torments shake,
 And Nature's self be grieved.

To Darwin, whose Botanic song
Wantons their wild amours among,

I leave the daring task :

To paint the gentler pains of love,
Whose flattering doubts affection prov
Oh Muse, is all I ask !

Descendant of the garden's pride
(Narcissus for himself who died)

A Jonquil graced the grove ;
A Butterfly, with silver wing,
Struck with her saffron charms in Spring,
With vows declared his love.

The virgin flower was coy a day,
She turned her golden head away,
And sent him to the sky ;
But when he next his flame expressed,
That she felt much the same confessed,
And sealed it with a sigh.

How joyful now the season past !
Each moment happier than the last,
They swore to love till death ;

He worshipped at her silken shrine,
And fluttering round her sweets divine,
Imbided her fragrant breath.

It happened that one sunny morn
They saw an Amaranth, hot-house born,
Released from crystal shrine ;
The Butterfly whose taste was good,
Who flowers, and honey, understood,
Swore she was quite divine.

The next day at th' accustomed hour
When insects leave their secret bower,
No glittering lover came ;
His Jonquil gazed around the grove,
And oft in trembling tones of love
She breathed his cherished name.

At first in sorrow's plaintive words,
She dreaded boys, museums, birds,
And patient watched, and sighed ;
But soon with sudden frenzy stung,
With throbbing heart, and faltering tongue,
' That horrid Amaranth,' cried.

' While here in dire suspense I die,
 Too sure that cruel barbarous fly
 Courts yonder trumpery flower ;
 Am I, less fair, less sweet than she ?
 Can he, oh false ! thus torture me
 To flirt with her an hour ?

How often did my mother warn
 To treat all Butterflies with scorn,
 A fickle, fluttering race ?
 Perfidious too, to call me fair,
 To idolize my virtues rare,
 And thus my choice disgrace !

Didst thou e'er know thy Jonquil trip ?
 Bee, Wasp, or Fly, my nectar sip ?
 Reserved for thee alone ;
 Ah, wretched flower ! Ah, lot severe !
 Flies who suspect, their doubts may clear,
 I here till death must moan.'

Then drowned in tears, she looked above—
 Oh joy !—she saw her feathered love
 On Zephyrs' pinions borne,

And she, who not an hour before,
Had vowed she'd ne'er behold him more,
At once forgot her scorn.

She frowned;—but something in her ear
He whispered which I could not hear,
I saw her smiles return;
Whether he'd slept that day too long,
Or roved the green-house plants among
She knew, I ne'er could learn.

ADVERSITY.

FABLE XX.

Veronica, an azure Weed,
In lanes and bushes known,
Long on the borders of a mead
Had unmolested blown.

Once wafted by a western breeze,
Her child the embrio fruit,
To Laura's garden in the vale
Descended and took root.

Left on a bed of plants for seed,
Neglected, and unseen,
Soon sprung and blew the vagrant weed,
And trailed among the green.

From country and relations snatched,
Disconsolate she pined,
And many a Butterfly dispatched
To sisters left behind.

A

Yet while her heart was far away,
Spite of regret she found,
Her roving sight would often stray
To blooming scenes around.

She saw each pampered garden-flower
Mankind's and Fortune's care,
Some grasping at imagined power,
Some fading in despair.

She saw mean jealousies engage
Each beauteous plant in turn,
Saw malice, spleen, and pride, and care,
In silken bosoms burn.

Then would she cry, with sighs repressed,
' Oh Fate, I blame not thee!
But were I half as much caressed,
How grateful should I be.'

One hot day drooping, scarce alive,
And panting for a shower,
She saw fictitious rains revive
Each fainting plant and flower.

Then first arose her plaintive voice,
And ' spare, oh spare,' she cries,
' One drop of moisture to rejoice
A fellow plant that dies.'

The tribes prosperity had trained,
Now wanton, fresh, and gay,
Marked not her moan, or deafness feigned,
And turned their heads away.

The flowers and blossoms watered first,
Next shrubs, who near her grew,
To quench her agonizing thirst
Refused the kindly dew.

But one, a Jasmine crowned with bloom,
More gentle than the rest,
With mercy viewed her wretched doom,
And sympathy expressed.

' Poor little bud! how camest thou here
In these luxuriant haunts?
Expect nor help, nor pitying tear,
From pleasure-hardened plants.'

Then shaking from her starry head
A grateful silvery shower,
A momentary succour shed,
And saved the suffering flower.

The story my compassion moved
For one so meek and young,
I bore her to the friends she loved,
The pasture whence she sprung.

FELICITY.

FABLE XXI.

Yon green winding Valley where gurgles the stream,
Conceals in its bosom a farm,
Where Damon has long enjoyed life's pleasant dream,
Free from poverty, vice, and alarm.

When the Summer sun darts perpendicular fires,
On the cottage luxuriantly spread,
A Vine rich with foliage and clusters aspires,
Exalting her beautiful head.

Not the fox-tempting grapes more deliciously glow
As depicted by Æsop of old;
Vagrant shoots o'er the porch their light umbrage bestow,
And flaunt in the breeze uncontrolled.

Ceres, fond of the swain, and the climate, each year
Waves her tresses of gold o'er his fields;
Breathing fragrance and plenty, his hay-ricks are near,
And his orchard rich beverage yields.

The low of the cattle, the flock's distant bell,
 Feathered tribes seeking sustenance round.—
 Oh 'tis strange sickly Pomp loves in cities to dwell,
 While such scenes are mid cottages found!

One evening I strayed, when the hay fields smelt sweet,
 And found the old swain in the shade,
 His daughter sat spinning, his boys at his feet,
 And content on his countenance played.

Fanny led to her garden, serene was the hour,
 From the sprites now no murmurs were heard,
 Save a murmur of joy from the fortunate flower,
 Their beautiful mistress preferred.

But they joined with the Vine in-a carol so sweet,
 I thought spell-bound nightingales sung,
 Ah! how can my uninspired accents repeat
 On the air what soft melodies hung?

‘ Oh pastoral Innocence, daughter of Heaven!
 Revisit our Isle,’ (was the strain)
 ‘ And again to mankind shall be Paradise given,
 And Eden shall flourish again.’

WONDER

The Child of Ignorance.

FABLE XXII.

Once on a rock reclined I lay
That o'er the Ocean frowned,
Tempests obscured the face of day,
And lightnings glared around.

Sad sighed the Spirit of the storm,
Congenial with my soul ;
Like passing hours of various form
I marked the billows roll.

Some heaved like woes with mighty swell,
And broke with hideous roar,
Some lightly foaming, curled and fell
Like pleasures quickly o'er.

Between loud peals, by livid light,
Or when the horizon cleared,
Th' unbounded waters to my sight
Eternity appeared.

While thus I mused, a powerful blast
 My strength could scarce oppose,
 Snatched from my bosom as it past
 A full-blown damask Rose.

Wafted away, a rocky cleft
 The vagabond impedes,
 Which (by the ebbing waters left)
 Was fringed with oozy weeds.

But who their wonder can describe
 To see the blooming love?
 She rushed upon the ragged tribe
 An angel from above.

Or as on tangled thicket strayed
 Decked with health's native hue,
 Appears a rosy-tinctured maid,
 Among a gipsy crew.

'Whence,' cried the chief of Fucus' race,
 'Oh beauteous stranger, say?
 What smiling minister of grace
 Has hither winged thy way?

Oft has the glorious source of light
 At eve thy tints displayed ;
 Art thou, with crown celestial bright,
 From heavenly regions strayed ?

The coral caverns of the deep,
 Where, as in crystal shrine,
 Unnumbered radiant treasures sleep,
 Boast not a form like thine.

Portentous being ! friend, or foe,
 Still let thy slave adore ;
 Oh bear me, ere the billows flow,
 To thine enchanted shore !

The Rose, whom briny damps assail,
 Began to droop and fade,
 She felt her strength, her odours fail,
 And feebly thus she said :

‘ Deluded Plant, soon wilt thou see
 I claim no heavenly birth,
 But know that Power, who rules the sea,
 With wonders fills the earth.

Think'st thou that He whose thunders roll,
Who bids yon lightnings shine,
Who spreads the stars from pole to pole,
Confines his gifts divine ?

Earth, Air, and Ocean, at his voice
Replete with beauties glow ;
No more deceived, in Him rejoice
From whom all blessings flow.'

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NOTES.

INTRODUCTION.

‘ Her wand a Cowslip’s stamen seemed.’ P. 1, l. 16.

The stamens are the slender filaments issuing from the centre of flowers, differing in situation, number, &c.

FABLE I.

‘ The image of the Sun.’ P. 6, l. 10.

The Sun-flower, or Helianthus, a native of America.

FABLE II.

‘ There Lythrum points her purple spears,
Iris her golden standard rears.’ P. 8, l. 13, 14.

Lythrum, or purple-spiked Loose-strife, and the yellow or marsh Iris.

‘ The giant Hemlock held a place.’ P. 9, l. 8.

The water Hemlock, which grows to the height of four feet, is a poisonous plant, bears yellowish flowers, and has a purple spotted stalk.

FABLE III.

‘Doomed malicious old virgins to fade,
Whom multiplied petals deform,
While she her soft banner displayed.’ P. 14, l. 13.

The garden flowers rendered double by cultivation, are barren.

The superior petal of the pea called the standard, or banner, is evidently designed to protect the other parts of the flower from the inclemency of the weather.

FABLE VI.

‘Embalm’d her in a pot pourri.’ P. 26, l. 4.

A well known appendage to a lady’s dressing-room, being a mixture of dried flowers, spices, herbs, and musk, put into a vase.

FABLE VIII.

‘The Hedysarum loves the sun.’ P. 31, l. 10.

The moving Honeysuckle, or Hedysarum-movens, of which there are specimens in the botanic garden of Edinburgh, furnishes the most astonishing instance of vegetable motion. It is a native of the East Indies. Its movements are solely excited by the influence of the sun’s rays. When the sun shines, the leaves move briskly in every direction. Their general motion, however, is upward or downward, but they not unfrequently turn almost round, and their footstalks are evidently twisted.

These motions go on incessantly as long as the heat of the sun continues, but they cease during the night, and when the weather is cold or cloudy, &c.

See SMELLIE'S Philosophy of Natural History, p. 5.

‘ While the Mimosa, modest maid.’ Ibid. l. 13.

The Mimosa, or Sensitive plant.

‘ And Lupins whom their buds delight.’ Ib. l. 16.

The leaves of the white Lupin, in the state of sleep, hang down, and protect the young buds from being injured by the nocturnal air.

FABLE IX.

‘ From yonder brake, on rainbow wing.’ P. 36, l. 17.

The Burnet moth flies slow morning and evening, and feeds chiefly on furze.

‘ The flowret fell asleep.’ P. 38, l. 16.

The flower of the Campanula closes at night.

FABLE X.

P. 39.

This fable was addressed to Mr. Pye in consequence of a conversation on the subject of the Seasons, and of his opinion introduced in his novel of *The Aristocrat*, Chap. 52.

FABLE XI.

‘ My country cousin, why so near ?’ P. 45, l. 13.

The Polyanthus is only a variation of the Primula genus, comprehending Primrose, Oxlip, Cowslip, and Polyanthus.

FABLE XIII.

‘ Oh! then in pleading strain, cried she.’ P. 53, l. 1.

The thought expressed in the three stanzas of the complaint of the Hare-bell, was partly taken from a little German song of a Violet and a Shepherdess, which was rendered for the author into English prose.

FABLE XIV.

. P. 55.

Silene quinque vulnera, or variegated Catchfly, so called from the clammy juice exuding from the stalks under each pair of leaves, sufficiently glutinous to entangle small flies.

The petals are remarkable for the deep red spots in the centre, like drops of blood, as if the flower had received five wounds.

FABLE XIX.

‘ Descendant of the garden’s pride.’ P. 74, l. 7.

The Jonquil belongs to the *Narcissus* genus.

FABLE XX.

Page 78.

Veronica, or wild Speedwell, a trailing plant.

FABLE XXII.

' Whence cried the chief of Fucus' race.' P. 85, l. 17.

The sea weeds are included in three genera, Alva or Laver, Fucus, and Conserva.

THE END.

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